

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested. Claims 2, 4-12, 16, 18-26, 28, 30, 31, and 36-39 are pending in the application, with claims 36-39 being the independent claims. Based on the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office Action rejected claims 2, 4-12, 16, 18-26, 28, 30, 31, and 36-39 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,523,021 to Monberg *et al.* (hereinafter "Monberg"). (*See*, Office Action at p. 3.) Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Monberg should be removed as a prior art reference under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). The present application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Appl. No. 60/199,551, filed April 25, 2000. (*See*, Specification at ¶ 1.) The Monberg patent was filed July 31, 2000. Thus, the effective filing date of the present application predates Monberg such that it should not be applied as a prior art reference against the present application. (*See*, M.P.E.P. § 706.02.)

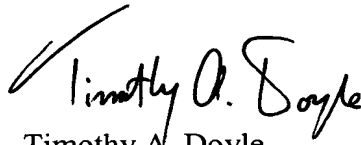
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicant believes that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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